

Document Analysis - The Witch Hunts

Today: Review homework & doc analysis

Homework: Study for test, Online extra credit.



1. "Presently he cryeth out of some poor innocent neighbor that he or she hath bewitched him. For, saith he, such an old man or woman came lately to my door and desired some relief, and I denied it, and God forgive me, my heart did rise against her . . . and presently my child, my wife, myself, my horse, my cow, my sheep, my sow, my hog, my dog, my cat, or somewhat, was thus and thus handled in such a strange manner, as I dare swear she is a witch, or else how should these things be"

Thomas Ady, describing the feelings of an English householder, circa 1650

At a time when medical knowledge was very limited, blaming a witch for such hardships was a way to make sense of what was happening and to explain the inexplicable. However, Thomas Ady is describing what happened to someone else, so his account may not be a true account of the householder's experience.



Doc analysis examples.notebook

2. "There is one Alice Prabury in our parish that useth herself suspiciously in the likelihood of a witch, taking upon her not only to help Christian people of diseases strangely happened, but also horses and all other beasts. She taketh upon her to help by the way of charming, and in such ways that she will tell nobody her sayings. "

Report of Churchwardens in Gloucestershire, England, 1563

The fact that the officials of the church issued a report saying it was likely that Alice Prabury was a witch is reliable evidence that they truly believed witches existed.



3.

"Innocent have I come into prison, Innocent have I been tortured, Innocent must I die. For whoever comes into the witch prison must become a witch or be tortured until he invents something out of his head and-God pity him- bethinks him of something When at test (the executioner) led me back into the prison he said to me, 'Sir, I beg you, for God's sake confess something, whether it be true or not. Invent something, for you cannot endure the torture which you will be put to; and, even if you bear it all, yet you will not escape, not even if you are an earl, but one torture will follow another until you say you are a witch . . . as you may see by all their trials, for one is just like another. . . . ' Dear child, keep this letter secret so that people do not find it.... Good night, for your father Johannes Junius will never see you more."

Letter of Johannes Junius, the mayor of Bamberg, Germany, to his daughter 1628

Since the mayor is expressing these thoughts in a letter to his daughter - the last letter he will ever write to her before his death - his words are likely very accurate in describing his treatment at the hands of his accusers he has no reason to lie.



4.

"It has recently come to our ears, not without great pain to us, that . . . many persons of both sexes, heedless of their own salvation and forsaking the Catholic faith, give themselves over to devils male and female.... We therefore, desiring, as is our duty . . . to remove all impediments by which . . . the . . . inquisitors are hindered in the exercise of their office . . . do hereby decree, by virtue of our apostolic authority, that it shall be permitted to the . . . inquisitors . . . to exercise their office of Inquisition and to proceed to the correction, imprisonment, and punishment of the aforesaid persons for their said offences and crime...

Pope Innocent VIII, "The Witch Bull." 1484

The fact that the pope has issued an official declaration acknowledging the existence of witches and permission to try and punish them, it is clear that the Catholic Church was fully engaged in the witch hunts.

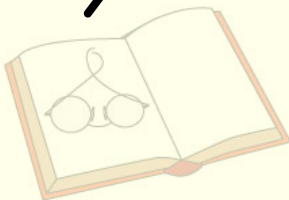


Sample Introduction & Thesis


The period from about 1480 to 1700 was a time of great achievement in European history. Exploration to new and distant lands was made possible by strong, well-financed governments such as Spain and Portugal, scientific achievement and technological advances challenged long-held beliefs about the universe. Religion often came into conflict with the new ideas of this period and the Church was virtually torn in two by the challenges of reformers such as Luther and Calvin. Amidst this atmosphere of change and confusion came a haunting period of history – the European witch hunts. Three reasons for the persecution of individuals as witches during this period include the general superstitious nature of the people, religious intolerance, and an overall misogynistic attitude.

H.C.

Thesis - note bing, bang and bong



Sample body paragraph

- T.S. Superstition, a belief in supernatural fallacies, was fairly common during the late 15th through the 17th centuries and one reason for persecution of individuals as witches.
- O.I. Science and technology had made many achievements but still left many questions unanswered. As a result, the answers people sometimes found to questions about things they didn't understand were based on rumor, false speculation, and ignorance. A series of misfortunate events that occurred after turning away a person in need (Doc. 1) led an observer to conclude that the person was a witch who had in some way cursed the home for failing to offer help.
- D.A. At a time when medical knowledge was limited, there was no other obvious explanation for the rash of problems that resulted, so superstition led to the claim of witchcraft. In addition, Thomas Ady is telling about what happened to another family, so his description of the ills may not be entirely accurate.
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Pairs Check - The Reformation

